



Message Discussion Guide Week of October 30, 2022

Message: Faithfulness (Fruitful series, week 8)

Key Scripture: [Luke 16:1-13](#)

Preacher: Pastor Jim Gascoine

Message Highlights:

- We have all had that “What were you thinking!” reaction to another’s action. If we do a initial, surface-level read through of today’s scripture, we might have the same reaction to Jesus’s words.
- It appears that Jesus makes a dishonest person the focus of the parable. But a closer reading reveals that what is being commended is not the fraudulent actions of this character, but instead their focus, energy and drive toward their goal.
- What is faithfulness? An important aspect of it is applying that same kind of focus, energy and drive to our commitment to Jesus Christ. And this is not a short-term focus, but life-long. Yet, in saying this, we recognize a problem: this is very difficult to achieve.
- We will get knocked down in life, as we suffer the effects of other’s sins. What is faithfulness: getting back up.
- Sometimes we are knocked to the ground by our own poor choices or wrong actions. What is faithfulness: getting back up.
- Our human nature produces a series of peaks and valleys in our lives. When we are down in one of those dark valleys, faithfulness is getting up and starting over.

- 1.) To begin with some humor, share with your group a time when you had one of those “What were you thinking!” reactions.
- 2.) Luke 16, the Parable of the Dishonest Steward, can be difficult to understand.
 - a. Who is the main character? What is his situation?

- b. What does he do to overcome his desperate situation?
 - c. How do you react to his solution? Is he an example we should follow?
 - d. In the Parable, the Owner commends the shrewd (and dishonest) manager. Why?
 - e. Note that we interpret this Parable as Jesus commending not dishonesty, but the kind of focus, energy and drive that goes all-in to achieve a goal.
- 3.)** Pastor Jim provided a definition of one aspect of faithfulness: that same focus, energy, and drive going all-in to build a strong relationship with and commitment to Jesus.
- a. How do you build a relationship with Jesus?
 - b. What does it mean to be committed to Christ? What would this look like in my life?
 - c. How easy is it to maintain that level of focus and drive?
 - d. Is it your experience that you fall short in maintaining that strong connection with Jesus?
- 4.)** Pastor Jim noted that our problem with faithfulness is that we are often “knocked to the ground” in our lives – that is we fall short of maintaining a strong faithful commitment.
- a. Can you think of a time when you were “knocked down” by another’s choices or actions?
 - b. Can you think of a time when you were “knocked down” by your own choices or actions?
 - c. To whom can we turn to find the power to get back up when life knocks us down?
- 5.)** Pastor Jim also spoke about how our human nature produces a continuing series of ups and downs, peaks and valleys in our life. We find it very difficult to maintain any intensity for a long period.
- a. If it is normal for us to experience peaks and valleys, why do we assume that the dark valley is a spiritual defeat?
 - b. How would it make a difference for you, if you simply committed to starting over and getting back up when you experienced one of those dark valleys?
- 6.)** What are some practical things that you can do in your life in response to this message?